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Research Article

Consumer Perception towards Luxury Watch Brands

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Abstract: This study is done to investigate the consumers buying preference towards luxury watch brands. A pilot study among a few luxury brand watch customers was done. Survey is done among 50 luxury watch brand users of age group 20-50 years. Both online and offline surveys were done to collect data. The results revealed that people prefer quality more than social status.
Keywords: Luxury watches, perception, brand loyalty, social status.

INTRODUCTION

The luxury goods market is growing and an increasing number of young people seem to be purchasing luxury goods. With the increasing popularity of various social media, luxury brands are adopting this approach as a means of communicating with the consumers who can be influenced by these channels. Luxury as a term in the recent past has widened its scope to add people in the lower bands of the spectrum. The rising disposable income in comparison to past statistics, has resulted in a propensity towards opting for luxury brands, be it products, services or experiences. So, luxury these days is not merely financial quantity, but more qualitative in nature. This study is an attempt to understand the preference of customers towards luxury watches. The objectives are:

- To study about consumers perception towards luxury watch brands.
- To study whether the consumers are buying luxury brand watch on the basis of quality or social status.

Srinivasan *et al*., [1] found that age and location of purchase had a significant relation to the category of luxury product purchased. Moreover, they could establish a relation between age and influence to buy luxury products and intention to repurchase the brand. Whereas younger respondents till the age of 40 years rated high on financial value, materialistic value and self-identity value, those between 40-50 years rated high on uniqueness value and snob value of the luxury products purchased. Prestige value was given a higher rating by those in the 36-40 age group.

Srinivasan *et al.*, [2] in yet another study on women's purchase behaviour towards luxury products, did a survey of 100 women in Mumbai. A significant relation could be established between age, occupation, annual income and their awareness of luxury products.

Rodrigues & Costa [3] while investigating the behaviour of luxury brand buying consumers with special reference to Chanel, found that brand prestige and attractiveness were the determinants of Chanel purchase. Extant literature also highlighted on factors like urge for being centre of attraction and showing supremacy over others, sense of achievement and enhanced self confidence that triggered luxury brand purchase [4].

A survey on 240 Punjabi female customers of five global brands was conducted by Thakur & Kaur [5]. The brands chosen were Zara, Armani, Guess, Versace and Calvin Klein. The results showed that self concept had a positive impact on their attitudinal brand loyalty.

Abdolvant, Forough & Targhi [6] investigated the influence of country of origin of the luxury brand towards consumer perception and purchase intention of

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Switzer watches in the Iranian context. The results proved a significant influence.

Naz & Lohdi [7] did a study to examine the impact of 200 young female customers' self-concept and life style on luxury goods purchases in Karachi, Pakistan. A positive significant impact of self-concept and life style of customer was found on purchase of luxury goods.

METHODOLOGY
The population consisted of any consumer in the age group of 20 -50 years in India who had the propensity to purchase luxury brands. Convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling technique was performed and the sample size was 50 respondents. Data was collected through survey technique using structured, self-administered questionnaires. The hypothesis was: *H- Quality is given more importance than social status while purchasing luxury products*

The data so collected was analyzed with simple percentage analysis. The collected and analyzed data has been presented with the help of various graphs and pie charts.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION
The figure-1 represents the gender category of the luxury brand watch customers. In this 54.5% of the respondents were males and 45.5% are females.
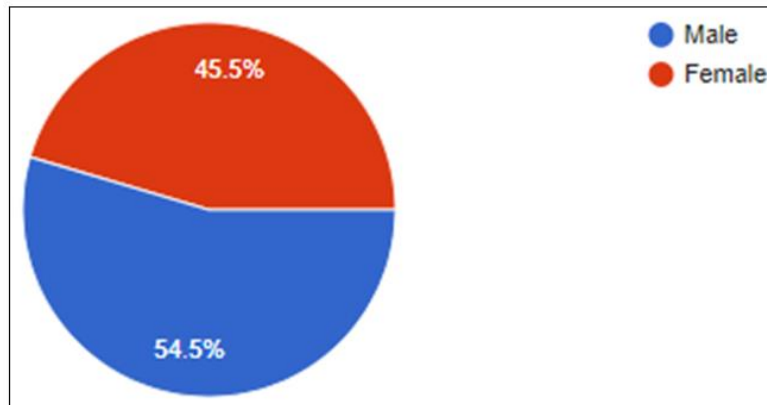

Fig-1: Gender distribution of respondents

Figure-2 representing the age group of respondents who use the luxury brand products. It reveals that majority (67.3%) of luxury brand consumers were falling in age group of 20-30 years, followed by 30-40 years at 18.2% and 40-50 years at 14.5%. So most of the luxury brand consumers are younsters.
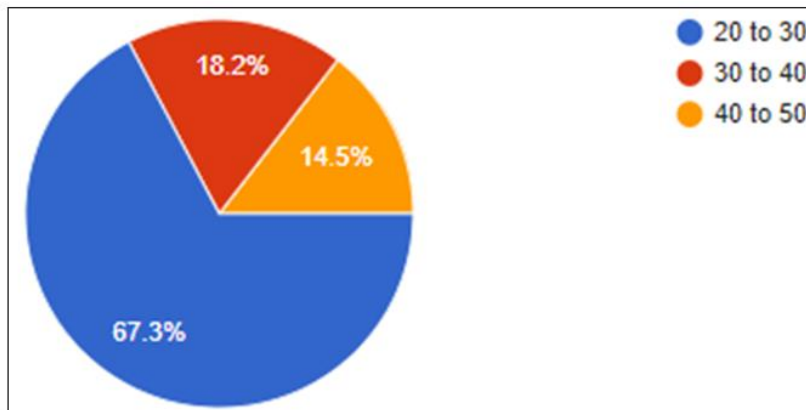

Fig-2: Age distribution of respondents

Figure-3 shows whether the respondent is a luxury brand consumer or not. From the collected data 83.6% respondents were luxury brand consumers.
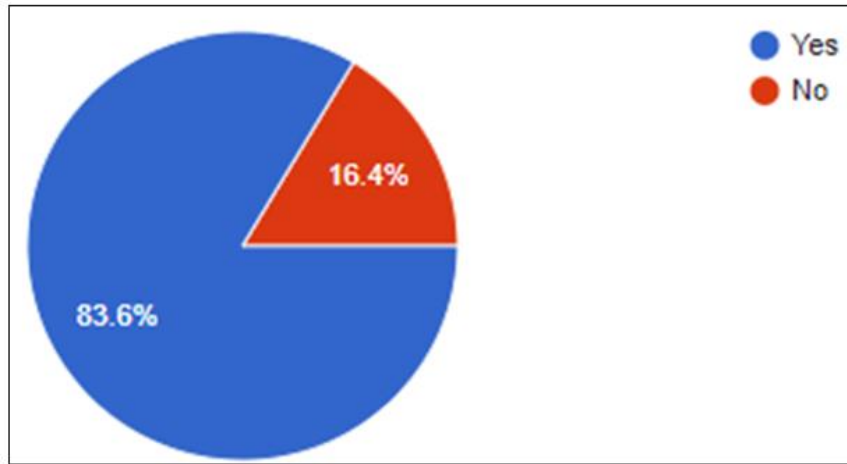
Fig-3: Whether a luxury brand consumer

The Figure-4 reveals that most of the respondents were giving importance to comfort, quality and durability while purchasing luxury brands. They gave least importantce to social status.
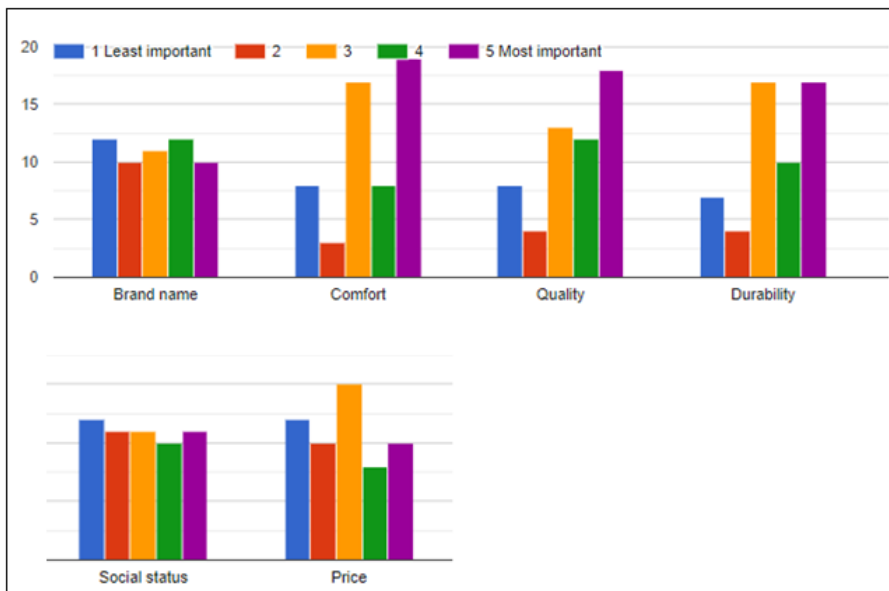

Fig-4: Important luxury watch brand attributes

The figure-5 reveals that most of the people (41%) preferred Tissot watch brand, 34.5% preferred Rado watch brand, 12.7% preferred Hublot watch brand and 10.9% suggested Cartier watch brand.
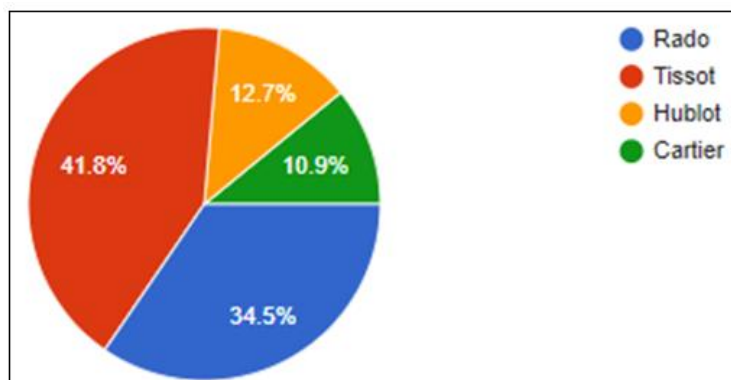

Fig-5: Most preferred brand of luxury watches

Figure-6 shows the frequency of luxury watch purchase. It could be observed that 43.6% purchased luxury products in a gap of over 2 years, 29.1% between 1-2 years and 20% purchsed between 6 months to 1 year. As low as 7.3% were frequent buyers, i.e. in less than 6 months.
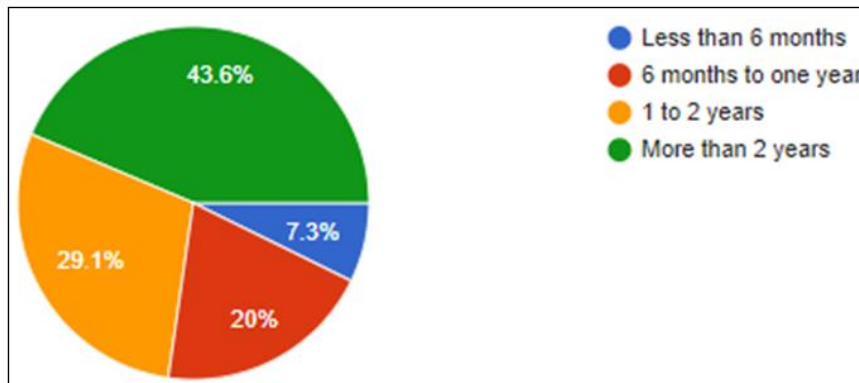
Fig-6: Frequency of purchase of luxury watches

Figure-7 shows the willingness to spend on a single purchase. It was found that a whopping 74.5% were ready to spend Rs. 20,000-50,000 and 16.4% between Rs. 50,000-80,000. As low as 7.3% of people were willing to spend above Rs. 1,40,000 on a single purchase.
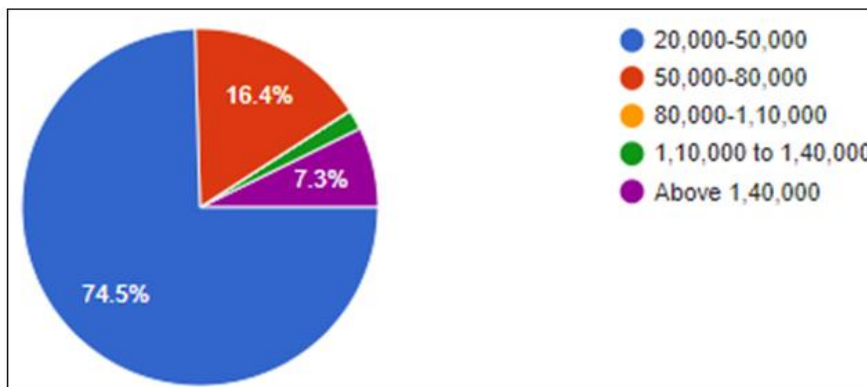
Fig-7: Willingness to spend

The Figure-8 reveals that store arrangement was preferred more than celebrity endorsement and movie influence while purchasing luxury watches.
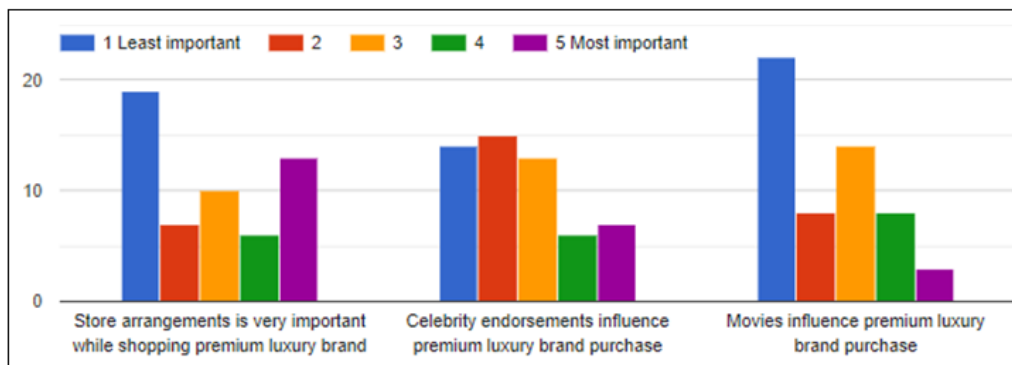
Fig-8: Luxury watch brand purchase influencers

From Figure-9 it can be observed that 30% of the respondents were getting information through the social networks like whatsapp, facebook, instagram, twitter etc. For 27.3%, it was through the online advertisements. While friends were the source of

information to 18.2%, it was television for 10.9% and
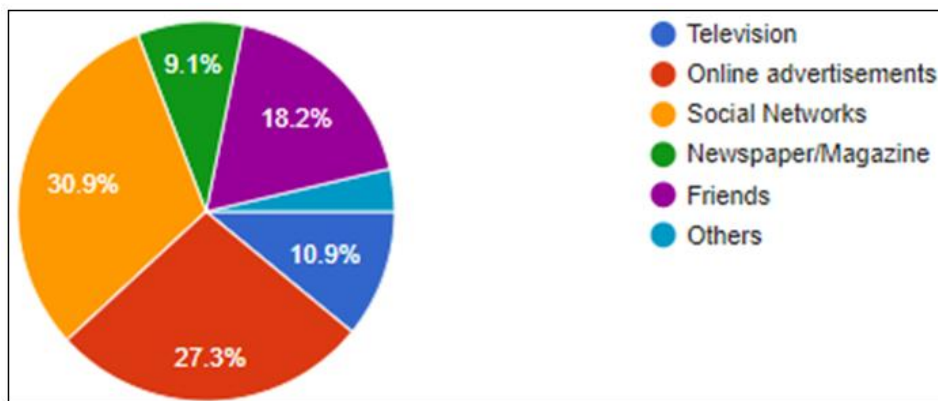
magazine and newspaper for 9.1% of the respondents.

Fig-9: Source of information

FINDINGS

- This research about 'consumer's perception towards luxury watch brands' has contributed evidence that people give more importance to quality than social status.
- 67.3% percent of the sample respondents were in the age group of 20-30, 18 percent of the respondents were in the age group of 30-40 and 14.5% of the respondents were in the age group of 40-50.
- More people tend to buy luxury products in a gap of more than two years, 29% percent of the customers buy products in 1 to 2 years, 20% of the consumers buy products in the gap of 6 months.
- Recognized brand names typically have shown a consistency in product quality. So people gave importance to the brand name.
- 74 percent people selected the budget they spend is 20,000-50000 in a single purchase.
- 83.6% of the respondents were premium brand customers.
- 54.5% of the sample respondents were male and 45.5% of them were female.
- In this research people gave least importance to television advertisement and movies. Most of the luxury consumers were premium users. They use social media and other online advertisements.
- Most of the people responded that pricing is an important factor in purchasing a luxury watch because spending a lot of money means expecting a good quality product.
- Tissot is the most preferred watch closely followed by Rado.

DISCUSSION

From this study, it could be observed that most of the people preferred quality, comfort and durability as their first concern to buy luxury branded products and they did not give much importance to brand name, social status and price. In this research, respondents were taken from a small area, Kochi. If it is done in detail in the future, the companies will get much more understanding about customer perception in depth. This research uses only quantitative methods like surveys. Qualitative methods like interviews can further confirm the results and give the findings a wider acceptance. This research also provide luxury watch making companies an idea that how people want to raise their self esteem in society and what all factors are important to them to purchase luxury branded products. Also according to this study companies can improve the product quality.

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